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Monumental cities.

MONUMENTAL CITIES: I

POTOSÍ

ST. AUGUSTINE

OURO PRÊTO

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MONUMENTAL CITIES: I

This series on monumental cities has been conceived and designed with a double objective: to bring about a better understanding of their historical and artistic significance, and to urge that such an important heritage of cultural treasures be properly preserved as testimony to a great common past and for the pride of new generations.

In the selection of the material we will try to maintain adequate geographic distribution, so that the equally valuable contributions of the various Hemisphere nations may be presented side by side, as befits the indivisible pieces of a single heritage.

These brief sketches are not to delve into considerations and details of exclusive interest to specialists. The history, architecture, and art of these cities have already been, and deserve to continue to be, the objects of special attention. Suffice it here to note the fundamental reasons for the merit we accord them today, the reasons behind what they were and are no longer. Only in this way can and ought one to explain the high relief in which they should always be shown on the map of the Americas.

—G. de Z.

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Front cover: *Baroque façade of church in Bolivia*
Back cover: *Sculpture of Christ Bearing the Cross by O Aleijadinho*

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POTOSÍ, BOLIVIA
1545

GUNNAR MENDOZA

FOR TWENTY YEARS Juan de Toledo walked the crowded streets of the Imperial City of Potosí, arousing—a living example of piety—unanimous veneration. He wore a miserable coarse woolen robe and in his hands he carried a skull that his eyes, animated with a strange light, insistently contemplated. "Weary of the vanities of this life, he has eyes only for death," the people said. When he died—the first quarter of the seventeenth century was ending—in one of the frightful eye-sockets of the skull they found a note that astonished everybody. A rich and handsome boy from Potosí, Juan had had a mortal enemy, so mortal, indeed, that he had had to kill him. Not content with that, he ripped out and devoured his heart, cut off his head, and from that moment in the garb of a pilgrim he walked contemplating the skull and repeating to it ceaselessly that his only regret about having killed its owner was that it deprived him of killing him once again, "for should he a thousand times come back to life, a thousand times would I kill him again."

One among the thousand strange colonial episodes of Potosí, this comes to mind here in preference to longer tales of more substance because it suggests an intense sensation of atmosphere. Well spoke the unfortunate Calixtus: "Better the flame that lasts for eighty years than that which passes in a day; and better that which kills one soul than that which consumes a hundred thousand bodies."

The material formula for Potosí was in truth quite simple: a huge deposit of silver and a complex human mechanism fashioned to mine it. A material simplicity that has suggested the conclusion, to some students, that Potosí is nothing more than a tremendous economic fact. Classic dilemmas of the Hispano-American conquest and colonial period—"This way to Panama and poverty, that way to Peru and riches"; "If you are gentlemen, then why are you so poor? And if so poor, then why such gentlemen?"—seemed also, according to narrow-minded thinking, to support the conclusion that wealth + poverty = economy. But this is but one of the historical equations of Potosí. Equally essential, or more so because it precedes it, is the spiritual equation. Without a specific psychic state, it is probable that neither the conquest nor the colonial period of our countries, one of whose characteristic incidents is Potosí, would have been possible. Greed + risk = passion.

Potosí was without a doubt a tremendous economic fact, but no less was it an impassioned flame in which countless souls were burned, and countless bodies into the bargain. A wise governor and a profound student of Potosí, Juan del Pino Manrique, in the last days of the colony, was to come up with a masterful phrase that went to the very heart of the matter: "A people formed tumultuously by greed, in the shadow of the wealth chance discovered."

□

There exists, then, a spiritual hypothesis as much as an economic hypothesis for the historical consideration of Potosí. But there are still others.

Potosí—according to the geographical hypothesis—is a high territory, barren and mediterranean: 13,600 feet of sterile altitude

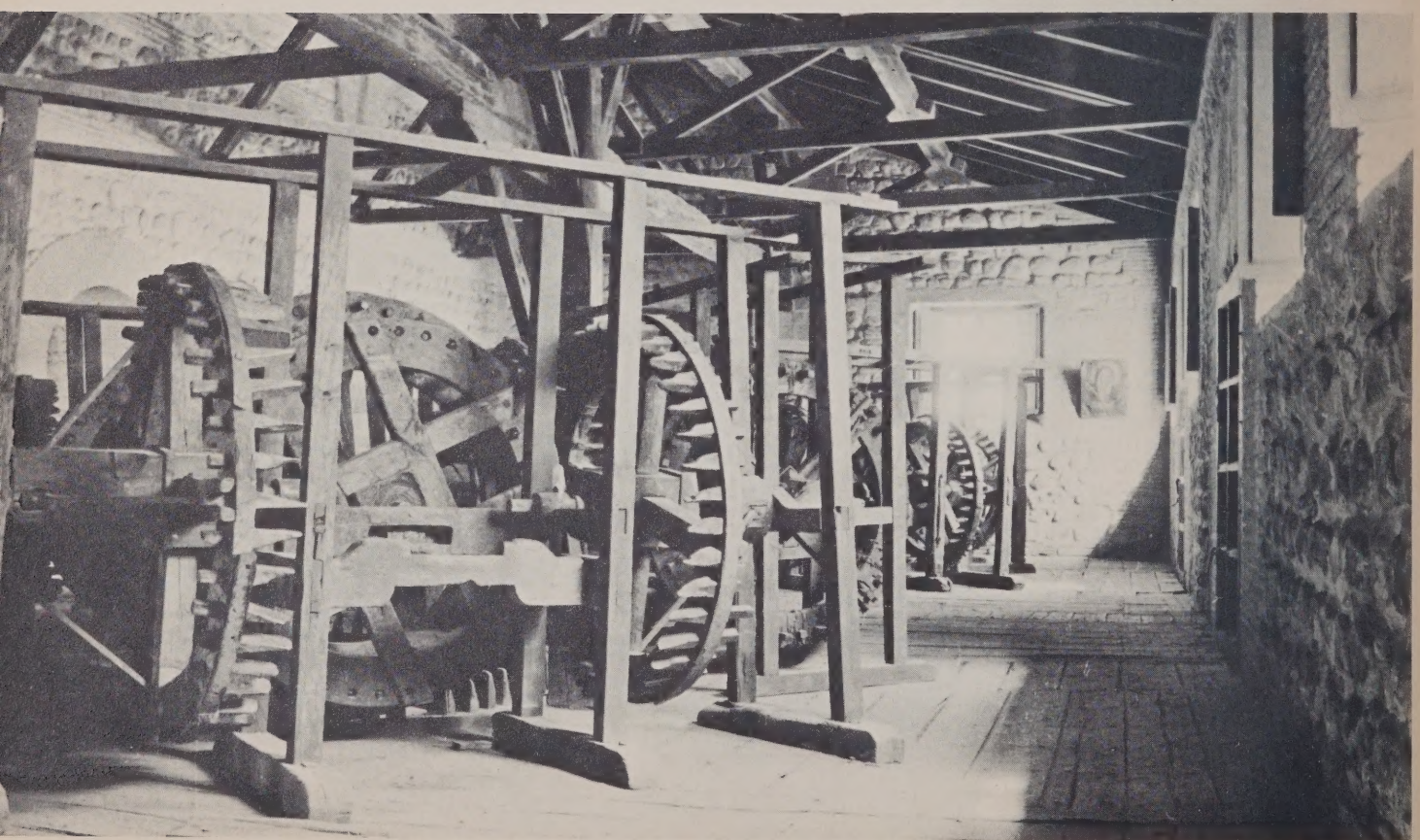
In 1545 the Imperial City of Potosí was founded at the foot of the Cerro Rico (rich hill), principal reason for its existence and symbol of its historical grandeur. No other eighteenth century city in the Hemisphere attained such prosperity and wealth. Situated at 13,600 feet above sea level, its civic and religious buildings testify to its magnificent past

in the Andean heart of meridional America. The natural port of Potosí was Arica, but licit or illicit commerce—mislaid silver from Potosí—also found an active entrance and even escape valve in Buenos Aires. A land greedy for resources essential for human sustenance and for the mining process, it absorbed foreign products greedily, not only from contiguous regions but also from farther away: coca from Cuzco, mercury from Huancavelica, wines from Arequipa, pack mules from Tucumán, fodder from Paraguay, and sugar from Santa Cruz de la Sierra. The geographic zone of Potosí's direct influence embraced an ample portion of the continent.

Potosí—according to the social hypothesis—is a venture in which the Indians took as decisive a part as the Spaniards and other Europeans. There, one sees so well, the process of cooperation and interpenetration of Spanish society and Indian society in the colonial period reaches a climax. The discovery of Potosí was an Indian feat. The mining process took advantage of Indian metallurgical techniques, such as the open-hearth furnace. The two labor institutions without which Potosí cannot be understood—for Potosí would have been impossible without them—were obligatory work, or the *mita,* and voluntary work, or the *minga,* both of Indian origin. The llama, an Indian domestic animal, was one of the principal means of transport to and from Potosí. The supplying of basic foodstuffs was left to the Indians. According to Father Vázquez de Espinosa, who personally experienced Potosí life while he prepared his charming *Compendio*

Left: *Detail of enclosed balcony in the House of the Corregidor, a characteristic feature of seventeenth century civic buildings, shows beautifully carved wooden panels. Severe climate forced use of glass-enclosed galleries*

Below: *Interior of the Casa de Moneda, or mint. Wooden minting machinery, once operated by animal power and at times human effort, is still intact. Here silver from nearby Cerro Rico was coined and stamped with seal of Kings of Spain. Legendary wealth of the city gave rise to the expression "it is worth a Potosí," to indicate the epitome of wealth*



y Descripción de las Indias Occidentales (Compendium and Description of the Occidental Indies), there were eighty thousand Indians from all parts of Peru in the Imperial City, in the first third of the seventeenth century, not counting women and children. [In those days Bolivia was known as Upper Peru.]

Potosí, in short, would not have been possible without a coordinating administrative machine for all the stages of the mining process, from the time when the metal was concealed in the earth until it was reduced to bars and money and exported to the metropolis [Spain] and other places. Each one of those steps supposed the existence of adequate institutional parts, whose simple enumeration makes clear the formal and functional complexity of the system: *Cabildo, corregimiento,* intendancy, mint, *banco de rescates,* royal hacienda, *audiencia* of La Plata, the viceroyalty of Lima, the viceroyalty of Buenos Aires, the Council of the Indies, the Spanish Crown. Someday the administrative machinery of Potosí, today half buried in the dust of time and forgetfulness, will have to be examined piece by piece to reconstruct historically its fabric and its functioning.

□

This, and much more that is left unsaid, confers on Potosí colonial life a flavor so personal that there is no lack of those who suggest that it was a unique case in Hispano-American history, thus causing the famous mining center to be baptized with yet another name—the Unique City.

Notwithstanding, it would seem that Potosí is rather an exaggeration or intensification of elements that were current in the history of the Indies. In Potosí the ordinary, the normal, the usual, assume extraordinary proportions, to become abnormal and unwonted. He who scrutinizes this life sees before him the general and essential phenomenon of the Hispano-American colony magnified, much the same way as things are enlarged when viewed through a microscope. If in all parts of the Indies there were businessmen thanks to whom, in great part, production was organized and guided, in Potosí the business spirit assumed a form so active that it became institutionalized in the Illustrious Guild of Mercury Miners—the oligarchic nucleus of that time and place—through which one can examine the role of private initiative. If the case of the Indian was much discussed in various parts and moments of the Hispano-American empire, the *mita* and the *minga* of Potosí fed the ideological debate—a true examination of conscience of the colonial system—to make it longer, more sustained and varied, covering all possible points of view, from the Las Casas paternalism of the Bishop of Charcas, Fray Tomás de San Martín, to the advanced and learned liberalism, "purified in the Spanish test tube," of Dr. Victorián de Villava, public prosecutor of the *audiencia* of Charcas. The subversive unrest that breaks forth epidemically all through the Hispano-American colonial period becomes endemic in the Imperial City: the "troubles of Potosí" begin with the very founding of the seat of government, and last until the last day of the colony. They take the most varied forms—conspiracy, riot, family feud, regional war, uprising, struggle for political and economic hegemony, personalist conflict—and they suck into their vortex the most opposite, picturesque and unexpected human types—friars brandishing swords and garrotes—and no lack of conspiracy with xenophile hangers-on who, at the end of the sixteenth century, planned to introduce into Potosí via the River Plate some hundreds of Englishmen to cleanse the earth of Spanish authorities. Potosí is the classic paradigm of the colony, it is the dream-reality of the aspirations of the epoch. In later years, to exalt marvels recently discovered or to be discovered, people would exclaim "It is a new Potosí!" and the magic name would crown new peaks, new mines, new treasures, until it reappeared thousands of leagues away, in Mexican lands: San Luis Potosí.

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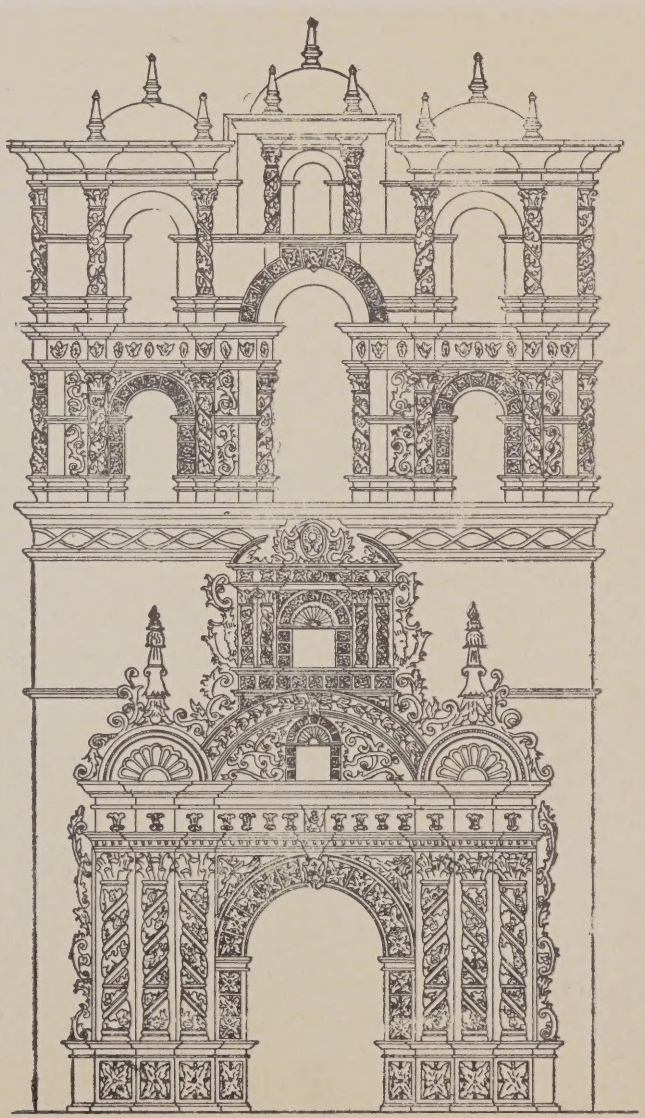
It was to be expected that a history so varied and precarious would beget in its course of almost three centuries a proportional accumulation of documents.

Bolivia's most important art museum is in the Casa de Moneda. Prosperity in the Imperial City encouraged the arts to flourish and artisan workshops to increase

In early eighteenth century reconstructions exteriors and interiors were more ornate and luxurious—for example, the Church of La Compañía. In 1700 a portal and tower, by Indian sculptor Sebastián de la Cruz, were added to sixteenth century structure; both are richly ornamented in the mestizo style. Towers with connecting arch are rare in New World baroque



Potosí's administrative machinery—and all the more so because of the inexorable Spanish formalism—was of itself depositing in the official archives such a quantity of documents that if Fray Antonio de la Calancha could say—exaggerating a little, certainly, in accordance with the custom of his time and in harmony with the theme—that each *marco* of silver cost the blood of ten Indians, with greater justification and less exaggeration it could be said that each *marco* of silver produced at the same time a page of official writing. Perhaps someone with nothing better to do might calculate how many turns around the globe could be taken with a tape made with the documents that Potosí's administrative machinery turned out.

And the matter is not one of mere quantity. All possible physical types and forms of colonial documents, with some few exceptions, are to be found in the official stationers of Potosí in a rich display of archivistic elements. And a corresponding geographical variety accompanies this variety of form, embracing all the centers of government connected with Potosí. Hence the great dispersion of Potosí's historical materials. There is the Imperial City itself, which has the actual papers of the local administration in its Historical Archives. Then there is the old city of La Plata, today Sucre, seat of the *audiencia* of Charcas, court of first instance for Potosí, whose materials are preserved in the National Archives of Bolivia. To the north stands Cuzco, center of an active commerce with Potosí, whose documental evidence is to be found in the Historical Archives of Cuzco, at the National University of Cuzco. Farther north is Lima, seat of the viceroyalty of Peru, for more than two centuries in charge of governmental direction of Potosí's affairs. Its papers are found in various repositories. To the south is Buenos Aires, seat of the viceroyalty of the River Plate (which from its inception replaced the viceroyalty of Peru in governing Potosí); it treasures the respective documents in the General Archives of the Argentine Nation. Across the sea is Spain, where the Council of the Indies and other pieces of metropolitan administration also contributed generously to the production of documents on Potosí, which today are collected in the Archive of the Indies. The accidents of time augmented this first international listing of repositories of interest to Potosí, and today the British Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris and various collections in the United States must be added to the list.

St. Matthew, *by Melchor Pérez de Holguín, outstanding painter of seventeenth century Upper Peru (today Bolivia), who, like other mestizo and Creole painters, was inspired by Flemish engravings but maintained a distinct Spanish accent. While resembling the work of Murillo and Zurbarán, his interpretations of saints and mystics were original. Painting in Casa de Moneda, Potosí*

Tiled roofs, cupolas and towers, unspoiled by contemporary construction, attract visitors to Potosí, a miraculously preserved viceregal city

On the other hand, outside of the historical mass typical of official archives, private initiative had also been accumulating more and more paper. From the clear and penetrating pages, well endowed with sagacious observation and serene judgement, of Cieza de León, scarcely ten years after the discovery of the Cerro, to the bulky descriptive synthesis of the restless honorary Potosí citizen Pedro Vicente Cañete entitled *Historia Física y Política de Potosí* [Physical and Political History of Potosí] in the final years of the Spanish domination, there runs a permanent spring of bibliographical productions that embraces all the catalogued material and even some that defies the cataloguer. Some of these works have been published, and others are as yet but manuscripts; many remain but not a few have been lost. We have to wonder how many are wandering around still unknown. Finally, there is no lack of those elusive editions that still whet the appetite of some eminent and indefatigable researcher. Human curiosity, in reciprocally complementary play between need and satisfaction, demanded and supplied news of Potosí, and in it the dream and the reality joined hands to throw to the world, in prose and in verse, chronicles, descriptions, histories, short stories, *romances,* annals, legends, memoirs, and advice. When the feverish boom days passed and the *potosinos,* tired of undertaking formidable enterprises in the Cerro and in the neighborhood of the mills, gave themselves over to whiling away their time in the nostalgic remembrance of past glories, a native son of the city undertook the arduous task of compiling and recasting the greatest possible amount of that rich bibliographic production in

something like a *Summa Potosina:* it was the *Historia de la Villa Imperial de Potosí* [History of the Imperial City of Potosí] by Bartolomé de Orsúa y Vela (a name not at all eminent today), whose account goes up to the first third of the eighteenth century. Only a small portion has been published. The author himself summarized the long *Historia* in some *Anales de Potosí,* published various times, a rambling creation that achieves the miracle of arriving at the truth by means of the improbable, being a disconcerting mixture of definite facts and absurd fantasies and precisely because it is that, it transmits a marvelous sense of atmosphere.

□

The study of Potosí has, then, perspectives that transcend local and national limits to become universal. Herein resides its interest as well as its difficulty.

Obviously the first step can only be to enter the repositories—as the miners once plumbed the depths of the legendary Cerro—to work the documental veins that properly used will give "historical truth, assayed and pure." This work is in progress. In the National Archives of Bolivia, starting some twenty years ago, a dense concentration of Potosí materials has been gathered, and in the Historical Archives of Potosí things are moving in the same direction. The French researcher, Marie Helmer, specializing in the *mita* and other economic aspects of Potosí, worked for several years in the archives and libraries of Paris, Seville, Madrid, Lima, Cuzco. Potosí, Sucre, and Buenos Aires, accumulating a treasure of high historical purity that will doubtlessly be put to good use. Lewis Hanke, with the same energy and scholarship with which he dedicated himself for twenty years to the study of the great Indian theme of Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, dedicated another five to the no less great and no less Indian theme of Potosí; he went through all the repositories of Potosí materials extant in the world, he gathered together an immense amount of documentation and he outlined a methodical preliminary consideration of the theme in his work *The Imperial City of Potosí; an Unwritten Chapter in the History of the New World* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1956), and he is promoting the editing of basic texts. Among these are the *Relación General de la Villa Imperial de Potosí* [General Report on the Imperial City of Potosí], by the Italo-Spanish miner Luis Capoche, a description of the customs of Potosí up to 1585, the most complete known for those years, which was published in Madrid in 1959. Lewis Hanke has also edited, with the author of this article, the imposing *Historia de la Villa Imperial de Potosí,* by the above-mentioned Orsúa y Vela, published by Brown University Press.

□

Meanwhile the majestic mountain, imperturbable, continues to silhouette its russet profile against the deep blue of the sky. Perhaps it, more than anyone else, knows the key to the history of Potosí—in the depth of its millenary shafts, its blind caverns, its lost galleries, its exhausted excavations, its blurred paths, its disconnected machinery, and in the sweat, tears, and blood that mingled with the metal in its bosom. Perhaps the final lesson to be drawn from it, as from the disturbing paintings of Melchor Pérez de Holguín, the intense painter of the Imperial City, or from the disillusioned verses of the anonymous singer of Potosí, will speak of the vainglory of the world, of the inconstancy of fortune:

Ayer maravilla fui	Yesterday I was a wonder,
Y hoy sombra mía no soy	Today not the shadow of myself. □

ST. AUGUSTINE, U.S.A. 1565

GUILLERMO DE ZÉNDEGUI

TO MANY PEOPLE, St. Augustine is just another city, a minute dot on the vast map of the United States. Even the majority of the people in the United States itself today probably envisage the twenty thousand residents of this small Florida town as living in pleasant bungalows amidst lush tropical foliage, leading lives of ease. No doubt they also picture St. Augustine with a modern shopping center and imagine the town announced several miles ahead on the road by a cluster of motels and a number of showy service centers, increasing steadily because of the competition.

Perhaps the best informed segment of this great majority would recall having heard of the existence of an old Spanish fortress that seems to be protecting the city from a vanished danger. And perhaps, along with the fortress, they would recall the bygone days of the conquistadors, pirates, and adventurers, when the flags of Spain and England flew alternately over this part of American soil in a kaleidoscope of names and episodes.

Today, thanks to the efforts, perseverance, and enthusiasm of some of its leading citizens, St. Augustine enjoys the renown that it deserves in the United States and in the countries of Hispanic origin in Latin America. The first settlement of Western culture in what was to become the United States took place there, on the Atlantic coast of the Florida peninsula long before the landing of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims at Plymouth, and even before Jamestown became the starting point for English expansion in North America.

But St. Augustine represents much more than that in the history of the Americas. It was the first meeting place of two cultures that share a Hemisphere, two cultures that many political, social, and economic reasons indicate must unite and identify with each other for the better defense of their common interests.

The story of St. Augustine begins in the second half of the sixteenth century, after the period of Spain's great discoveries and conquests, when that country began the laborious historical process of digesting a large portion of the territory of the New World. The protagonist of this particular episode was Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, an archetype of the great captains of the period.

One needs only look at a map of the Americas to understand the strategic importance that Spain attributed to the Florida peninsula and particularly to the bay discovered by bold Juan Ponce de León in 1513, at the very location that is today the site of St. Augustine. The route of the Indies taken by the two large fleets of galleons known as the Armada and the Fleet, which made the annual crossing in convoy between Spain and the overseas possessions, passed through the Straits of Florida in both directions. On the return trip, when the fat-bellied ships' holds were bulging with riches, they remained close to the coast until they reached the favorable Gulf Current. The Crown of Castile was vitally concerned with protecting the Spanish galleons from a surprise attack as they sailed through this narrow-throated passage in the New World. Navigation was made even more perilous by the many islets and shoals shown on the charts throughout the whole northern portion of the Antilles archipelago. Pirates abounded in the spots where their lightly rigged shallow-draft vessels—sometimes flying a single lateen sail—could easily outmaneuver the cumbersome pursuing galleons.

Therefore, when Spain received word of certain French, British, and Flemish incursions into its territories to the north of Cuba, and learned that the Huguenots had constructed a fort—Fort Caroline—at a strategic point on the coast from which, well pro-

PLANO DE LA R.L FUERZA, BALUARTES, Y LINEA DE LA PLAZA DE S.T AGUSTIN DE FLORIDA, CON SU PA-
RROQUIAL MAYOR, CONVENTO E IGLESIA DE SAN FRANCISCO CASAS Y SOLARES DE LOS VECINOS, Y MAS ALGUNAS FABRICAS Y HUERTAS EXTRA MUROS DE ELLA, TODO
segun y en la forma que existe oy 22 de Enero de 1764. quando en virtud de su entrega a la Corona Britanica se han embarcado, y salen para la Havana y Campeche
el ultimo resto de Tropas y Familias Espanolas de la Guarnicion y Vecindario de dicha Plaza de San Agustin
DESCRIPCION.
Con los numeros 1.s hasta 18 han senalados la principal Real Fuerza, Puertas y Baluartes de la Linea, y de 16 a 21 las Fabricas construidas en las Huertas extra-
muros de la Plaza hasta donde llega el terreno que comprende el Plano.
Los numeros 22 a 74 apuntan las Fabricas que se hallan dentro de la propria Plaza, y no comprenden Guarda, pues las que la forman se distinguen por el ABCD, y con los numeros 28. 29
293 las casas que cubrigen todas y al frente de los nombres de los texinos Duenos de ellas, las varas que de Norte a Sur, y de Este a Oeste, tiene
el solar de la pertenencia de cada una, bien entendido, que las que llevan ceros es por estar levantadas en tierra
ner del Rey, los quales corren sin medida explicado a saver

Plan of St. Augustine drawn in 1764 upon the departure of the Spaniards. In lower right corner is San Marcos Fortress

Aerial view of St. Augustine and the fortress today

tected and supplied, they could intercept ships going to and from the Indies, Admiral Menéndez de Avilés was immediately dispatched to drive the French from the peninsula once and for all and take the necessary steps to preclude any other foreign incursions.

Neither dull nor lazy, Avilés set about this task for which he was exceptionally well suited, for he was at once bold, rash, astute, and completely unscrupulous in dealing with the enemies of Spain in its New World possessions.

Jean Ribault was no match for such a formidable adversary, and very soon nothing remained of the French presence on the peninsula except an unimpressive handful of Frenchmen whose lives the Admiral had spared. But that military operation resulted in something else important both for Spain and for the history of the Americas—the founding of the city of St. Augustine.

On September 8, 1565, with rolling drums and waving banner, Pedro Menéndez de Avilés took possession of the bay bordering San Anastasia island and marked the precise spot where the city was to be built. Of course this was not a settlement of peaceful farmers like the Puritans, but a presidio, a military installation. Of first and foremost importance was the construction of a fort, to be maintained in a state of constant vigilance and adequately garrisoned.

The fort was the reason for the existence of the city that was to surround it. That is why a crude stockade was erected as a defensive wall around the first village. St. Augustine lived by the fort and for the fort, and this was its role well into the nineteenth century, when the fortress became obsolete.

In 1586, twenty-one years after its founding, St. Augustine suffered a hard blow at the hands of the English. We can imagine the fear that struck the garrison of 150 men when the news came that a fleet of twenty-five ships, capable of carrying two thousand troops, was off the coast. It must have been prudence rather than cowardice that prompted the entire military and civilian population to hide in the surrounding woods and give the English free rein to carry out the sacking and total destruction of the fortified town.

In 1668 Captain John Davis and a group of English buccaneers invaded St. Augustine and overcame and pillaged it. However, they withdrew without burning it to the ground. The Spaniards read this as a sign that they planned to come back soon, and this prompted plans for the construction of a stone fort that would provide adequate resistance to potential enemies.

Inland, not far from St. Augustine, the Carolinas and Georgia were alarmingly expanding their territorial domains and their zone of trading influence with the Indians of the peninsula. Clashes between the English and Spaniards became more frequent. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the fortress was attacked several times. Governor Moore, of South Carolina, and Colonel Palmer and General James E. Oglethorpe, of Georgia, failed in turn to seize it. Then, in 1763, just as it was gaining a reputation for impregnability, St. Augustine was turned over to the English without a shot, along with the rest of the immense territory in Florida nominally possessed by Spain, in an unusual trade for Havana, which had been conquered by the Earl of Albemarle.

But since wars between rival commercial powers in the Americas were won in the New World and lost in the Old World, it was barely two decades before the Floridas were returned to Spain. Eastern Florida did not become U.S. territory until 1821.

It should be noted that the Floridas in those days meant Eastern Florida, and, more particularly, St. Augustine, since for more than two centuries there had been nothing on the peninsula worth holding and defending—except St. Augustine itself.

If Florida was synonymous with St. Augustine, St. Augustine was synonymous with its fortress, the Castillo de San Marcos. It is so prominent, its massive architecture is so well known, that even today it is impossible to speak of the oldest city in the United States without bringing to mind this military structure built in the style of the Spanish fortifications of the eighteenth century, of which Havana and Cartagena also boast good examples. San Marcos was a part of the same string of military bases intended to form a cordon of fire from Florida to Colombia, through

Bridge over moat of San Marcos Fortress

City gates to original settlement of St. Augustine

Havana, Veracruz, and Darién. Each had four pointed bastions so that all flanks could be covered in the event of an attack; connecting the bastions were steep curtain walls topped with gunholes along an elevated platform. The bastions and stone curtains formed an open square, a central patio, which gave access to compartments with vaulted ceilings, and a ramp led to the elevated platform. The entire fortress was surrounded by a moat, and there was a drawbridge, approached through the barbican, the small outside fortification that guarded the bridge.

The fortress was built with the only available stone, one that was easy to transport and easy to work: coquina, an aggregate of marine shells cemented together with natural mortar. Coquina was used not only in the fortress but also in all of the civilian construction of importance in St. Augustine, and its characteristic appearance soon becomes a familiar feature to the visitor.

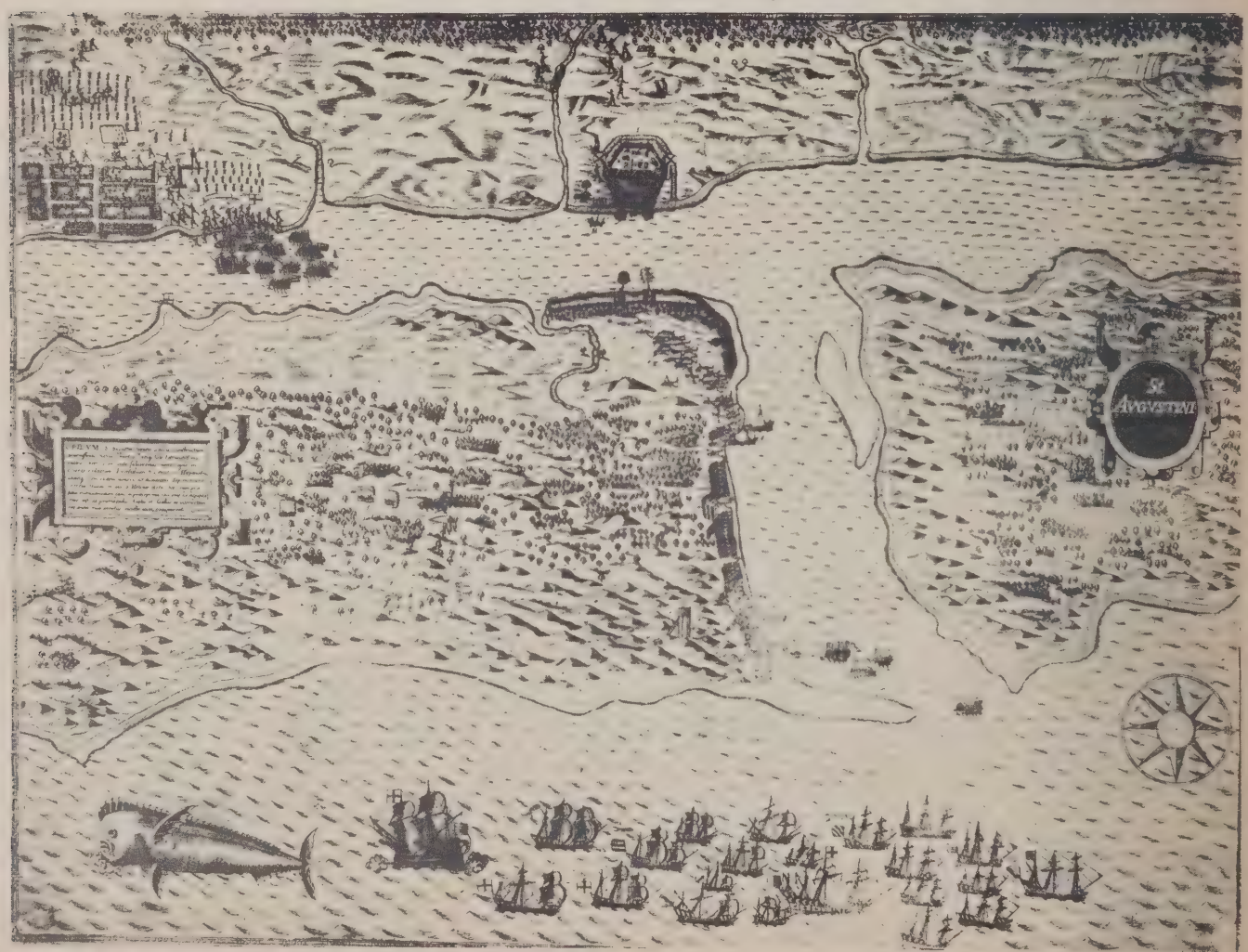
As for the city itself, St. Augustine reveals its Spanish heritage at first glance. It is a Spanish city without Spaniards, of course, and to a great extent the style has been modified to fit the needs and climatic conditions of the place. Colonial St. Augustine architecture has been defined this way in the city's zoning ordinance, on the basis of research carried out by the St. Augustine Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission:

A type of architecture indigenous to St. Augustine, and influenced in development by climatic, economic, geographical and social factors; the building practices and designs of Spanish, English, Minorcan and early

American peoples were important factors in producing said architectural type; in character this architecture is simple and unpretentious; houses were rectangular; the hallway, often used for the stair hall, extended ordinarily the length of one elevation and adjacent to an exterior wall, with rooms opening off said hallway; outer walls were usually of stone, especially for the first floor, averaging twenty inches in thickness, faced with stucco and painted a solid color without ornamentation; walls of the upper floors were generally less thick and often were carried up with wood, with clapboard exterior; single story arcades are another feature characterizing this architectural type, placed usually on the south elevation, and in lieu of the arcade, small balconies frequently were constructed as an integral part of the buildings; wooden walls are generally, though not invariably, clapboard, without ornamentation; openings were rectangular, and proportioned as to the elevation and wall space; windows as a rule were enclosed with shutters and frequently were protected by grill work, roofs were in the earliest period flat; but later were gabled or shed roofed, with wooden shingles; floors were hard packed sand, mortar, or wide pine flooring, inside walls were lime plastered and painted; ceiling joists were exposed and the roof rafters mortised and pegged; windows characterized by wide reveals inside; fire places occur later, though not in the earliest periods, decoration was simple and achieved by coloring walls and ceilings; such ornamentation as occurred consisted of simple capitals or arcades and balustrades, frequently of crude workmanship.

The modern concept of a museum city permits the reconstructed or restored buildings to be used for the diverse needs of contemporary life, but their users must comply with certain

Left: *Calle Real, whose newly restored houses in Spanish style have characteristic chalk-white walls and mahogany grills on balconies and windows*
Below: *Map (c. 1584) depicts Sir Francis Drake and his fleet invading St. Augustine*
Opposite page: *Courtyard in the Posada, on St. George Street*



requirements in order to preserve insofar as possible the style and atmosphere of the period in which the buildings were constructed.

The task is not easy, for it requires the skillful direction of special architects and the spontaneous cooperation of the citizens, in whom a respect for their own traditions must be aroused.

The first step in returning St. Augustine to its original appearance was to divide the city into zones according to the number and quality of the buildings worth restoring within the zones, and then to establish an order of priority for the execution of the plans. Three categories of projects were established—historical research, archaeological research, and architectural projects—to be carried out jointly.

A group of houses that once belonged to a prominent Spanish colonial family named Avero was chosen as a starting point for reconstruction because a large quantity of documents relating to the properties had been found, and some of the houses were in a fairly good state of preservation.

The U.S. National Park Service also took part, as the custodian of the fortress of San Marcos. The work that it has done there is superb.

Not far from the old city is the enchantingly peaceful cove where Pedro Menéndez de Avilés landed. There he had a Mass of thanksgiving said, and there he established the first mission in the United States. Nombre de Dios Mission forms an inseparable part of St. Augustine's history. Referring to this universal symbol of Christianity, the Archbishop of Florida, Joseph P. Hurley, said:

"It proclaims to all our people that this nation began in faith, and that by a rebirth of faith, this nation shall overcome its atheist enemies, and continue its glorious career of freedom under God." □

OURO PRÊTO, BRAZIL
1712

MARIA RAMOS

THE CITY OF Ouro Prêto was made a national monument because it holds the greatest array of colonial art in all Brazil. Although it was founded in 1712, its buildings are still intact.

Only the living figures of that bygone age have given way to the present-day people, with all the weaknesses, defects, or qualities that might be expected to evolve. Chiefly, those earlier figures have been transformed into that active force—the students, who fill the streets, byways, and passages that still bear their eighteenth century names, and who give Ouro Prêto the atmosphere of a university campus.

Two hundred and sixty years have passed since the time when, to simplify administrative chores, the several camps formed by the groups of miners were consolidated into Vila Rica de Albuquerque, the Rich City, by General Antônio de Albuquerque Coelho de Carvalho, governor of the new Captaincy of São Paulo and Minas de Ouro. However, the discovery of the veins that were destined to become the most famous of the gold mines had occurred about a decade earlier.

That was the time of the *entradas,* or expeditions, and the *bandeiras,* or bands of adventurers, the former sponsored by the public authorities and the latter by private enterprise. Groups of bold men, filled with daring and determination, rode through the Brazilian hinterland in all directions, bent upon exploring the interior of the country, seizing Indians for agricultural work, or discovering new mineral wealth. They came chiefly from São Paulo and were therefore called Paulistas.

Antonil tells of an expedition of Paulistas from Taubaté who penetrated the wilderness of Cataguás and halted one day at the bank of a stream, atop the hill called Tripuí. There a mulatto, a member of the expedition, dipped a wooden trough into the depths of the stream to get water, and when he lifted it out he saw that the water contained a number of black quartz-like stones or pebbles that he was unable to identify, even though he had had experience in mines. Later these pebbles were taken to Rio de Janeiro and there the Governor, Artur de Sá e Meneses, biting into them, brought to light gold of the finest quality, for which the bands of adventurers had been seeking for almost half a century.

After the expedition of Paulistas, of which the anonymous mulatto who discovered the black gravel was a member, returned to Taubaté, various *bandeiras* searched in vain for the coveted Peak of Itacolomi or Tripuí, which served as the point of reference in the region of Ouro Prêto. The mountain landmark seemed to have disappeared as if by magic. Then, Antônio Dias de Oliveira thought of using the route by which the old Indian hunters had made their return, and this time the peak was sighted, not at the entrance to the Tripuí Valley, from where it was hidden by neighboring ranges, but at the exit.

It was June 23, the eve of the Feast of St. John. Antônio Dias' expedition, made up of his friends and relatives, after having crossed the Borda do Campo, Rodeio, and Pires mountain ranges, and the wide stream bed of the Cachoeira, climbed up to the heights known today as the Campo Grande, and there they pitched their camp. They did not realize that the Itacolomi Peak was so near. But at dawn on the following day they saw the mountain's unmistakable silhouette sharp against a cloudless sky. It was not until a year later that thanks were given to the Saint with a mass sung in the little chapel of St. John—a rude thatched hut—by Father João de Faria Fialho, chaplain of the expedition.

On top of the mountain on that long-ago June 24 Father Fialho blessed the waters of the Doce and Velhas rivers that poured down to give the bounty of that bit of Minas Gerais to the eager adventurers. They were not long in arriving, vast numbers of them, drawn by the fame of the black gold, the good gold, the 23-carat gold, which, according to Antonil, "made clefts in the nuggets as if it were bursting out on all sides, while from within it gave off reflections that looked like rays of sunlight."

The Gold Rush

The call to get together to start mining by the sluicing process was sounded by Pascoal da Silva Guimarães after he found a very rich deposit on a hillside where the Lages road presently passes. The metal there was mingled with the earth itself. This was gold dust, the gold that actually led to the founding of the future Vila Rica, attracting to it the attention not only of Portugal but of outsiders, who, in less than seven years, created a seething center of activity where the fever to get rich possessed all who took part in the search.

The several camping grounds were separated half a league one from another by extensive forests that covered the hills. Among these groups the camps of Antônio Dias and Ouro Prêto formed the nucleus.

The Paulistas, discoverers of the region, were dissatisfied with the granting of gold-bearing lands to newly arrived Portuguese who came in search of wealth, whom they scornfully dubbed *emboabas,* and to Brazilians from the states to the north, known by the generic name of *baianos,* or Bahians. This gave rise to the War of the Emboabas, and disorder prevailed from 1707 to 1709.

Ouro Prêto's famous works of colonial art, which were destined to become known throughout the world as relics of a past with which the thread has been broken, began to take form around 1720, when the first cathedral of Ouro Prêto was built. It was constructed of lath-and-plaster walls and adobe, but it marked the beginning of the resplendence of the fabulous Vila Rica. That year was the most noteworthy in the history of the new El Dorado. A decree issued in 1719 provided for the establishment of processing plants for the Minas district. In them the gold was refined, one fifth being exacted for the Portuguese Crown and the expenses of processing plus taxes. Among these latter was one levied specifically for the "pin money of the Queen." The circulation of gold dust was forbidden. This system of tax collections, which weighed heavily on the mining population, led to the rebellion of Vila Rica, a revolt that was put down by the Count of Assumar, then governor of the captaincy. The rebels were under the leadership of Pascoal da Silva, a Portuguese, Sebastião da Veiga Cabral, former governor of the colony of Sacramento, Fra Vicente Botelho, and others. The one who paid dearly was Felipe dos Santos, hero of the revolt. Taken prisoner and condemned summarily, he was hanged in Vila Rica and then his body was dragged through the streets and quartered. The camp of Ouro Pôdre, among the more prosperous ones and belonging to Pascoal da Silva, was burned, and ever since that time the place

Ouro Prêto's unique charm and magnificent eighteenth century architecture make it a veritable museum town today

has been called the Morro da Queimada [the Burnt Hill]. The blackened traces may still be seen today on its slopes.

Era of Splendor

Vila Rica's era of splendor, in which the extraction of gold reached its zenith, lasted a quarter of a century, from 1725 to 1750. The famous festival of the Eucharistic Triumph serves as a good yardstick of that era of wealth and of the magnificence of the celebrations, all tinged by the enchantment and beauty that money so easily makes possible. Simão Ferreira Machado relates the story of the event, describing the luxurious cortege, in sharp contrast to the unostentatious buildings—a parade of persons royally clad, symbolizing the Winds, the seven Planets, the Mother Church, the two hills that surround the city, Ouro Prêto and Ouro Fino, followed by nymphs, angels, pages, and trumpeters—all preceded by the figure of Fame, and all described by the impromptu social chronicler of the day. It was a frenzy of gold, a delirium of gold.

Then followed the pompous parade of the religious societies with their crucifixes, maces, and torch holders of silver from Oporto, Portugal, platforms of silver gilt, statues adorned with gold and jewels, garments of brocade embroidered with precious stones. Next came the clergy of the two parishes "in the liturgical splendor of their dalmatics, surplices, chasubles, maniples, and stoles," apparel whose richness and exquisite taste can still be appreciated in the Museum of Ouro Prêto.

All of this ornateness contrasted with the poor background presented by the adobe houses. The quartz rock of Itacolomi had not yet begun to be used; it was first used in 1738 in the construction of the Governor's Palace, which marked the beginning of building with stone and mortar. It was not until the second half of the eighteenth century that Vila Rica began to be the Ouro Prêto of today, or rather, the old Vila Rica, which still displays all the charm and delights of the golden mining heyday.

When progress invaded other parts of Brazil, Vila Rica remained isolated, with its narrow alleys, its passageways, its steep streets, in the midst of areas devasted by excavations, open to the sun like great scars in the wounded earth.

Because of the poverty to which it was reduced, its name was mockingly changed in 1809 to Vila Pobre, the Poor City, according to the testimony of the English geologist Mawe. That same poverty impeded the construction of new buildings, and today new construction in the city is extremely rare. There was, to some extent, an effort made to copy the legitimate colonial style of the early buildings, but this was not successful. The new architecture that was attempted took certain details from the old but it failed to capture the strength, the purity, the tranquil dignity that were characteristic of the colonial buildings.

Discontent aroused in Ouro Prêto by the zeal of the governor of the captaincy, Viscount Barbacena, in trying to collect the "fifths" of gold in arrears, owed to the Portuguese Crown by those who worked the mines, resulted in 1789 in the so-called Minas Conspiracy. However, the "Conspirators," most of whom were intelligent and cultured men, well informed about the new political ideas that prevailed in Europe, had wider goals in mind; "they dreamed of emancipation, first, for the Captaincy of Minas Gerais, and then, if possible, for the rest of Brazil, following the example of what had occurred in the English part of America." But the Conspiracy was very soon discovered and those involved in it were most severely punished by the Portuguese Government.

Ouro Prêto has its protective spirits, its legends, its manes, and its ghosts. It has, says Manuel Bandeira, "two phantoms whom we meet at every turn of the street—Tiradentes and O Aleijadinho." And in addition it has the other Conspirators, and a romantic pair, Marília and Dirceu. All are tutelary spirits of the long-ago golden capital, its patrons, its heroes, its martyrs, its artists, and its poets, who immortalized its name and inspired its tradition.

The gold civilization produced in literature the so-called "School of Minas," which was tied in with the freedom movement of the Conspiracy; in sculpture, it produced Antônio Francisco

Church of São Francisco in Ouro Prêto. The plan and sculptural decoration on the façade are attributed to Antônio Francisco Lisbôa, nicknamed O Aleijadinho

Drawing of façade of São Francisco. Decoration is concentrated around doorway and windows

Detail of altar done during O Aleijadinho's early period

Four of the twelve Prophets sculpted for the Church of Bom Jesus do Matosinhos at Congonhas do Campo, done by O Aleijadinho when already suffering from a crippling disease

Colonial fountain near the Casa dos Contos, or mint, in Ouro Prêto

Lisboa, or O Aleijadinho, the Little Cripple, as he was called; in painting, there was Manuel da Costa Ataíde. There were six poets: Cláudio Manoel da Costa, Tomás Antônio Gonzaga, Basílio da Gama, Santa Rita Durão, Alvarenga Peixoto, and Silva Alvarenga. Cláudio Manoel da Costa, Gonzaga, and Alvarenga Peixoto were close friends. They were all participants in the Conspiracy and were captured, whereupon Cláudio committed suicide and his two companions were exiled to Africa.

Dirceu and Marília

Of these poets the most famous was Tomás Antônio Gonzaga, because of the romantic aura that surrounded him. His work, *Marília de Dirceu,* became the most popular love lyric of Portuguese literature, and no poem, with the one exception of *Os Lusíadas,* ever achieved so many editions. For his poetic work Gonzaga adopted the name of Dirceu. Born in Oporto, Portugal, he came to Brazil at the age of eight, a fact that had its influence on his development as a poet. He was graduated in law from the University of Coimbra in 1768 and was sent to Vila Rica as justice and attorney for the affairs of deceased and missing persons. Arriving there as an already mature man, he fell madly in love

with a Brazilian girl of sixteen whom he saw sitting at a window while she was spending the weekend at the home of an aunt who lived next door to the attorney's house. There in the window he glimpsed the beautiful Maria Dorotéia Joaquina de Seixas, whom he immortalized with the name of Marília.

Having been appointed judge of the court of Bahia, Gonzaga requested permission to marry. The idyl was to have culminated with the wedding day late in May. But in April he was accused of conspiracy, taken prisoner, and sent to the island of Cobras, whence he was exiled to Mozambique, and there he died. Marília never forgot her troubador. She died at an advanced age, still unmarried, and still surrounded by the aureole that her poet had given her. Even today her house is revered in the city of Ouro Prêto, and one may follow the romantic path she trod from the steps of her home to the Praça Dirceu, and visit the little bridge that bears her name, where she talked with her sweetheart at the hour when the bells of the Cathedral were chiming the Angelus.

Tiradentes

The outstanding figure of the Minas Conspiracy was Joaquim José da Silva Xavier, nicknamed Tiradentes [the Tooth Puller]. No one served the cause of revolution with greater fearlessness and enthusiasm. He paid with his life for the "crime" of wanting to liberate his land. All the city of Ouro Prêto pays tribute to his memory and Brazil considers him the protomartyr of its independence. When the Conspiracy failed and the others, frightened, tried only to save themselves, this modest subaltern took upon himself all the blame and he suffered the supreme penalty. After he was tried, hanged, and quartered in Rio de Janeiro, his head was dispatched to Ouro Prêto and exposed on a pole in what is now the Praça Tiradentes. His house was destroyed and the land on which it stood was covered with salt, so that nothing more would ever grow upon it.

Thirty years later, in 1822, Tiradentes' dream became a reality with the proclamation of independence, and a year later Vila Rica became the capital of the Province of Minas Gerais.

O Aleijadinho

The person responsible for the inclusion of Ouro Prêto in anthologies of world art is Antônio Francisco Lisboa, O Aleijadinho, the Little Cripple, whose entire extraordinary life was dedicated to the innumerable sculptured works that make Vila Rica the most authentic relic of the colonial era of Brazil. The little information that we have about the exceptional personality of the artist and his prodigious exuberance states that he was the son of a slave named Isabel and of the master architect Manoel Francisco Lisboa. Antônio Francisco had two brothers; one of them, Father Félix, who was ordained at his expense, was also a sculptor and to him are attributed the images of St. Francis in the church of the same name, and of Sts. Benedict and Anthony in the Church of O Rosário.

O Aleijadinho died in 1814, crippled and blind, but his work still lives in the churches that he planned and constructed, brilliantly adapting the baroque style to the eighteenth-century style of Minas Gerais itself. "It is work," says Manuel Bandeira, "that brims over with strength, vigor, and a dignity achieved by no other of our artists."

Antônio Francisco Lisboa had only a primary school education. As an adolescent his favorite reading material was the Bible, a constant source of inspiration to him. He also had the habit of reading medical books, led to them, undoubtedly, by his terrible disease, which according to all indications must have been leprosy. His father, the best architect in Minas Gerais, was his greatest teacher. He passed all of his childhood and a great part of his adult life in his father's offices. The plan for the Church of Nossa Senhora do Carmo was drawn up by O Aleijadinho's father. According to his biographer, Rodrigo Bretas, Antônio Francisco was dark, short in stature, with a stocky, uncomely body, thick dark curly hair, and a strong and vibrant voice. He was wildly enthusiastic about life and living, and up to the age of forty-seven he enjoyed perfect health. After that time the acute onset of his illness so deformed him that he came to be called O Aleijadinho, a name that was tenderly bestowed, not to disparage but rather to console him. For thirty-seven years, working with veritable fierceness, he fought the disease. It began with the atrophy of his hands, which first grew crooked and drawn and later dropped off. But this did not prevent the artist from continuing his work. On the contrary he worked with redoubled vigor, with his hammer and chisel strapped to his wrists. Thus it was, at the age of sixty-one, that he made the twelve statues of the Prophets and the sixty-six figures at Congonhas do Campo.

Because of his illness, he withdrew, seeking to hide himself from the eyes of his fellow men. He would go out of his house at the first light of day and would return only after night had fallen. He allowed no visitors at the place where he worked, inside a sort of tent, in order to protect himself from the stares and greetings of the curious. Only mass in the La Conceição Church, at Antônio Dias, drew him from his house. To the end of his days he glorified God through his art and finally, unable to work, he waited, on a small bed made of three planks placed on two wooden blocks, for "the Lord to place on him His divine feet."

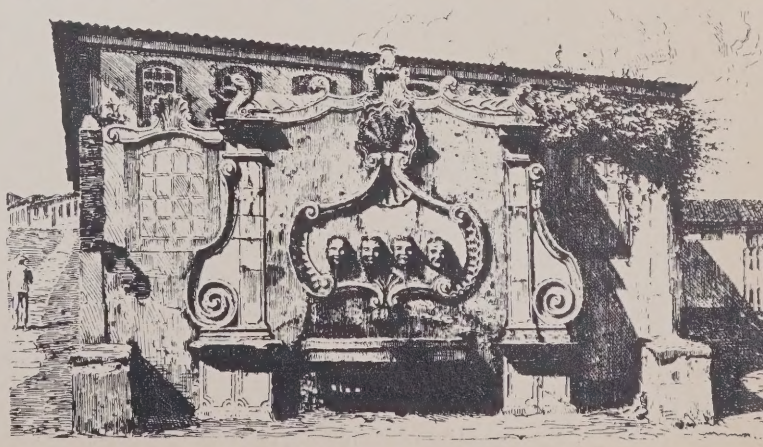
O Aleijadinho's works are scattered through the numerous churches of Ouro Prêto and the surrounding communities, particularly in the churches of São Francisco and Carmo in Ouro Prêto, Carmo in Sabará, São Francisco de Assis in São João del Rey, Bom Jesus do Matozinhos in Congonhas do Campo, and the cathedrals of Pilar and Tiradentes. His art found its expression in the general adornment of the churches, and in altars, chapels, pulpits, fonts, frontispieces, retables, tribunes, and candelabra. Among the statues, those noted above of the Prophets and the figures of the Stations of the Cross at Congonhas do Campo deserve special emphasis; they are visited each year in the month of September by thousands of pilgrims.

Travelers of the past went to Minas Gerais in search of its gold, its diamonds and emeralds. Now thousands of tourists travel by plane or by bus to Belo Horizonte and from there to Ouro Prêto, attracted by its art, its antique stores, its soapstone carvings and popular ceramics that are mingled unabashedly with the semi-precious stones in the shops along São José Street.

Ouro Prêto Today

The city of Ouro Prêto is only fifty-nine miles from Belo Horizonte, the capital of the state of Minas Gerais. The National Historic and Artistic Heritage Service which made Ouro Prêto a national monument, does not allow progress to invade the streets or to infringe upon the appearance of the city. Trucks and other heavy vehicles use a circumferential road in order to prevent tremors and cave-ins of the city's historic relics. □

Fountain of Marília on the Praça Dirceu



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